

Ascension School Board Meeting Minutes 3-10-08

Attending: Pastor, Fr. McNally; Principal, Mary Jo Burns; Lynn Frederick; Terry Thiese; School Board Members, Liz Skalitzky, Peg Mackie, Tom Carraher, Patti Farlee, Craig Shannon, Jason Allington, Mike Iannaccone, Dan Rodde. Newly elected future board member Jill Pollard attended as a guest.

- ❖ Meeting begins at 7:08pm
- ❖ February minutes approved.
- ❖ No public comment.
- ❖ Principal's Report
 - Ms. Burns thanks Mike Iannaccone and Neil Heskin for help with creating the new tuition schedule. Much consideration and analysis went into the final schedule.
 - Discussion of proposed strategy for handling enrollment that exceeds our classroom size capacity. The majority of the problems are in the Pre-K classes (and especially multi-aged program). Ms. Burns will be asking families with 5 year olds currently registered in the multi-age program to move their children to Kindergarten. This will allow more room for other students in the multi-age program.
 - Need to discuss our class size policy which was adopted 3/7/05. Discussion deferred until Fr. Larry arrived at the meeting.
- ❖ Development Report (Lynn Frederick)
 - Lynn gave a financial report dated 3/10/2008. This report summarized the various contributions Ascension received as a result of Development and other activities.
 - The remaining Air conditioners are ready to be installed. Installation is scheduled for Spring Break.
 - Lynn is seeking heavier School Board involvement in the Development process. Proposed strategy is to have 3 school board members (one from each "class") sit on the Development Committee. Member identified as:
 - Mike Iannaccone
 - Terry Thiese
 - New member to be identified from new members joining in June.
 - Development Committee should meet to discuss moving forward on projects listed in report. Lynn will schedule meeting.
- ❖ School Board President's Report
 - Thanks for everyone's help on the School Board Elections. Congratulations to newly elected board members and thanks to all who ran.
- ❖ Committee Reports
 - Academic Committee
 - Committee meeting on 4/3/08 and will report on the new reading program Ascension is adopting at our next Board meeting.
 - Finance Committee
 - Discussion by Mike regarding the annual budgeting process and the specific issues/topics he and Neil have been covering as part of our efforts to finalize the tuition schedule for next year.
 - We need to continue to look for new/different ways to shape the tuition schedule to increase much needed revenue for Ascension.
 - Eliminate or re-work family or multiple-child discounts?

- Does this go to long range planning?
- How do we want to grow the school?
- There are many other questions/considerations need further thinking/consideration by Ms. Burn and Fr. Larry as part of our overall long-term school mission/strategy.

- Long Range Planning Committee
 - No report. This committee will meet to discuss the various topics covered in this meeting.
- Parish Outreach
 - No report

❖ Liaison Reports

- Technology
 - Technology issues continued to be raised and addressed given strong leadership from Laura Allen and the technology committee. We are still without a committee lead and are looking for interested parents to get involved in this role.
- Finance
 - No report. Discussed as part of tuition and class size issues.
- Development
 - No report. Discussed as part of Lynn's report.
- Maintenance
 - No report
- Home & School
 - No report
- Athletics
 - No report.
- Commissions
 - Meeting scheduled for 3/31/08.
- Endowment
 - No report
- Extended Day
 - No report

❖ Pastor's Report

- Reconciliation in process of being completed
- Two Baptisms on Holy Saturday
- The Parish Audit has been completed and the summary was published in the Dome. Nothing out of the ordinary was found.
- Discussion on class size policies given the registration for next year exceeds our current limits. Fr. Larry and Ms. Burns will work together to decide if we can increase the class size in specific grades to accommodate students on the waiting list. Before they make a final decision, they asked the School Board to provide their opinions and input. This topic was discussed at length.
 - Archdiocese, State and Teacher recommendations for class size
 - Archdiocese: 30 recommended; will go 35
 - State: no guidelines
 - Teachers: 25/26 desirable

- Teachers were used to draw up policy of 3/7/05 and a great deal of consideration and input was put into the policy at this time.
- Extensive discussion of how do we can increase revenue and still adhere to the mission of the school. Many possibilities were discussed, but **NO final decisions were made.** This will require much additional discussion and decision-making in parallel with our long-term goals for Ascension.
 - To take all families and their kids who want to come to Ascension?
 - What number do we work best at?
 - Do we take everyone or adhere to class size policy?
 - Let families know cost of educating a child
 - Would they consider paying/donating (tax incentive) more?
 - Eventually phase out multi-child discount?
- ❖ New Business
 - Hot lunch program – Questions on how many families are using this program and what the benefit for Ascension is. Ms. Burns to provide this data at our April board meeting.
 - Past School Board Chairs
 - Peg Mackie suggested we look for ways to get past School Board Chairs involved in selected activities/issues we address. This has been used at other schools with success.
 - Head lice: increasing concerns of the continued problems. Parents need to make sure they are taking the proper steps to eliminate lice before sending children to school. School needs to communicate strict rules for preventing the continued spread of lice.
 - Pancake Breakfast: Commentary that the absence of the Book Fair hurt the success of the breakfast.
 - School Board Elections: Need to find a way to allow for ‘absentee voting’. Look at overall process and ID other ways to improve.
- ❖ Summary (bullet points)
 - Final review/discussion of tuition schedule for next year.
 - Long range planning will meet to continue discussion around various issues on class size, school mission, opportunities for increased revenue, etc.
 - Development priorities – continue to refine our plan and put it into action.

Meeting adjourned 9:55pm